

# **The Merry Wives of Windsor**

By: **William Shakespeare**

Play no. 286

Opening show: 14/07/1973

**Hebrew by:** Alisa Baruch

**Directed by :** Avraham Asseo

**Set by:** Arthur Goldreich

**Costumes by:** Adina Reich

**Music by:** Poldy Shaetzman

**Extra Song's and Epilogue by:** Dan Almagor

**Movement by:** Joram Boker

**Lighting by:** Michael Lieberman

The Cast

**Sir John Falstaff:** Avraham Ronai

**Sir Robert Shallow:** Seharia Tubi

**Slender:** Eran Baniel

**Sir Hugh Evans:** Yitzhak Kluger

**Geore Page:** Gad Keinar

**Simple:** Joni Chen

**Anne Page:** Tony Sach

**Host of the Garter Inn:** Yitzhak Bareket

**Pistol:** Jaacov Ben-Sira

**Nym:** Reuven Goldwasser

**Bardolph:** Joni Chen

**Robin:** Rafi Goldwasser, Michael Arnon

**A Singer:** Eran Baniel

**A Maid:** Ora Frosh

**Mistress Quickly:** Elischeva Michaeli

**Rugby:** Rafi Goldwasser

**Doctor Caius:** Israel Biderman

**Fenton:** Alex Kutai

**Mistress Ford:** Eva Lion

**Mistress Page:** Tova Pardo

**Frank Ford:** Jehuda Efroni

## **The Play**

### **Part One**

Sir John Falstaff meets Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page at a country dance. Imagining that they have both given him the leer of invitation he leaves in high spirits and in love. Justice Shallow and his cousin Slender accuse him for the wrongs done them by his three rascals, Bardolph, Nym and Pistol. However the matter is forgotten when pastor Evans mentions Anne Page as a possible match for Slender.

In the Garter inn Falstaff hands his men duplicate love-letters to be delivered to the ladies, but the rogues refuse and he cashiers them and sends the letters by his page – Rubin; in revenge Pistol and Nym resolve to inform the husbands. Anne Page has three suitors: Slender, supported by Sir Hugh Evans, Dr. Caius, the French physician and Fenton, an honest gentleman.

Each seeks the support of Mrs. Quickly, a servant to Dr. Caius, (who professes to "know Anne's mind").

Dr. Caius however discovers that Sir Hugh Evans has sent a letter in Slender's behalf and challenges the parson to a duel.

The merry wives compare Falstaff's letters. Determined to be revenged upon him they send with Mrs. Quickly token of encouragement to Sir John.

Meanwhile the husbands have been warned by the cast-off rogues. Ford resolves to go to Falstaff disguised as Master Brook & sound him out.

Back in the garter inn Mrs. Quickly delivers to Falstaff the wives' replies.

Next comes Mr. Brook's visit who solicits Falstaff's aid as a go between and is assured that before night he shall know Ford for for a knave and cuckold.

Falstaff arrives at Mrs. Ford's house but the wooing is soon interrupted by Mrs. Page, who tells that Ford is on his way home. Falstaff in his desire to escape – throws his pride to the winds & gets into the buck-basket.

## **Part Two**

Mine host of the Garter has made fools of both. Dr. Caius and Sir Hugh by sending them to different places to await the duel.

Following his escape in the buck-basket, when he was dumped into the muddy ditch, Falstaff is visited a second time by Mrs. Quickly with apologies for the accident and a promise of another tryst with Mrs. Ford. He later tells his friend Brook of his adventure but bids him keep up hope.

In front of the Pages' house Fenton and Slender try, in turns, to win Anne Page's heart. Slender is Mr. Page's choice but Mrs. Page prefers the Doctor - Anne is in love with Fenton.

At the second rendezvous, Ford again surprises Falstaff who prefers this time to flee in woman's dress. Although he escapes again he is thoroughly beaten by the irate husband. The merry wives then tell their husbands of their sport with the Fat Knight and all join in a scheme for his final humiliation.

The scene is set to trap Falstaff at a midnight fancy dress party, where he is met by the merry wives, who flee at a noise and leave the old fool to be ignominiously pinched & ridiculed by the happy crowd. During the sport Dr. Caius steals away with a maid in green, Slender takes another in white & Fenton runs off with a third. While the fun is at its height it is revealed that Dr. Caius & Slender has each eloped with a great kubberly boy and that Fenton has married Anne Page.